

2018 VFP Resolutions

01-2018 Failed, Vote not to support, 8 Yeas, 1 Nay, 3 Abstentions

Making Peace Possible in Syria

Whereas, VFP advocates peaceful resolution of international conflicts, and

Whereas, our opposition to U.S. military intervention does not imply justification of intervention by others, nor support for brutal repressive regimes anywhere, and

Whereas, war in Syria continues wreaking ghastly human suffering, and a refugee crisis causing an alarming rise of racism and Islamophobia in the U.S. and Europe, and

Whereas, the internal conflict in Syria is worsened by military intervention from the U.S., Russia, Iran, Turkey, Saudi, Qatar, Hezbollah and others, and

Whereas, concentrating only on the dreadful U.S. policy in Syria has utterly failed to build a mass movement to end the war, and

Whereas, the UN Human Rights Council reported *"The Syrian government has committed crimes against humanity of extermination, murder, rape, other forms of sexual violence, and torture"*, and

Whereas, South African jurist and UN High Commissioner Navi Pillay said *"the atrocities by the Syrian government far outweigh crimes by the opposition. President Assad's regime is mostly responsible for the human rights offences."* and

Whereas, Physicians for Human Rights says: *"The Syrian government has responded to popular protests with sustained and extreme violence and intimidation, and an all-out assault on the country's medical system."*, and

Whereas, the OPCW-UN investigation reported that it is *"confident that the Syrian Arab Republic is responsible for the release of sarin at Khan Shaykhun on 4 April 2017"*, and

Whereas, CODEPINK has said: *"The U.S. coalition, the Assad government and Russia continue to devastate the already war-torn country."*

Therefore Be It Resolved that VFP condemns war crimes of ALL parties in Syria and calls for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops including: U.S., Russia, Iran, Hezbollah and Turkey.

Be It Further Resolved that VFP urges its members to learn more about the Syrian conflict with particular attention to reading and hearing what Syrians themselves think.

Submitted by Andy Berman, Chapter 27

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Marksmanship Training Programs

Whereas, an epidemic of school shootings exists nationwide- at least 239 school shootings have taken place since 2012 (Sandy Hook), that have resulted in over 400 shooting victims ([School Violence Archives 2/15/18](#)), and

Whereas, there are approximately 1,100 high school JROTC Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps units that offer marksmanship and safety training programs, and

Whereas, the majority of these rifle ranges are located on school grounds, and

Whereas, Congress amended the Gun Free School Act to be a part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which requires all schools receiving Title IV federal funding to enact a Zero Tolerance Policy for students in possession of any weapon, and

Whereas, under The No Child Left Behind Act's Zero Tolerance Policy, any school that receives federal funding from Title IV, must expel any student who brings a weapon on campus, and

Whereas, under such Zero Tolerance Policies, school officials are given broad authority to search any student and their belongings whenever they have reasonable suspicion that a student may possess a weapon, and some schools attach additional penalties for bringing a weapon to school, such as the revocation of student driver's licenses (FL and KS), and

Whereas, the presence of JROTC marksmanship and safety training in schools sends students a mixed message about guns, and

Whereas, the removal of JROTC marksmanship and safety training programs has already been demonstrated to be an achievable goal where it has been tried and can result in the JROTC units being completely removed due to drops in mandated enrollment numbers;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace encourages its members to investigate the existence of JROTC marksmanship and safety training programs in their school communities and to actively organize to remove such rifle ranges. (See Guide to Removing Marksmanship Training from High Schools at www.nnomy.org).

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Resolution Against Privatization of The Veterans Administration

Whereas, the Congressional Budget Office estimated the VA cost for private care would be 10% higher than the payment rates for Medicare and the Physicians for a National Health Program states the medical costs at the VA are 20% lower than Medicare rates, therefore costs for private care might be 30% higher than the same care provided by the VA, and

Whereas, the RAND Corporation's decade of research found that VA provided care is equal to or better quality than private sector care in all forty-seven quality-of-care measurements comparing VA outpatient care with comparable civilian facilities, and

Whereas, the Department of Veterans Affairs is better equipped than most community providers to coordinate complex physical and mental healthcare for veterans, and

Whereas, a bipartisan survey by Lake Research and Chesapeake Beach Consulting 80 percent of veterans polled oppose turning VA health care into a system of private sector vouchers inadequate to cover costs;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace...

- (1) Supports policies that provide necessary resources to serve veterans by maintaining a robust Federal Government Veterans Health Administration;
- (2) Supports increased core services and outreach to female veterans and people who have been affected by military sexual violence and trauma and have been underserved by the Veterans Health Administration.
- (3) Supports policies that would create integrated health care networks for veterans with the Veterans Health Administration, serving as the coordinator and primary provider of care when and where needed as determined by the VA medical staff to ensure timely and convenient access for all enrolled men, women, lesbian, gay, transgender and queer veterans.
- (4) Opposes privatization/outsourcing to private sector for profit care of medical and psychological care for our Veterans.

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04-2018 Passed, 12 Yeas, 1 Abstention, 0 Nays

Call for General Accountability Office (GAO) Investigation of Henoko Base Construction, Okinawa

Whereas, GAO declared in its 2017 *Marine Corps Asian-Pacific Realignment* (GAO-17-415) that the runways at the proposed MCAS Futenma Replacement Facility in Okinawa are of insufficient length, and

Whereas, in doing so GAO established itself as competent to investigate the merits of this project, and

Whereas, other aspects of this project cast doubt on whether it serves US national interest, to wit: *the majority of the once-sovereign Okinawans, now bearing 74% of all US bases in Japan, view this project as another example of the discrimination to which Okinawa has been subjected throughout its modern history, and

- because both of fierce protests and of environmental problems, construction is years behind; and
- among the latter is the fact that the runways are to be built over a pristine coral garden, habitat of the endangered dugong, requiring an environmental sensitivity of which Japan's Defense Agency seems incapable; and
- soil testing, begun in 2014, continues today, which means the Defense Agency has not yet determined that the sea bottom is sufficiently firm to support two runways (some areas are soft limestone, others mayonnaise-like slime); and
- adjacent the site are 19 electrical transmission towers, buildings including a college campus, and the Henoko Ordnance Storage Facility, all exceeding US military height limits; and
- *two active earthquake faults lie beneath the site; and,

Whereas, these problems make a mockery of the US military's "good neighbor" pretensions and place its entire presence in Okinawa in danger, and

Whereas, the Japanese Government, obsessed with saving face, has not proved a reliable informant regarding this project;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans For Peace urges GAO to launch its own investigation of this situation, to determine the merit of these allegations, and to judge whether attempting to force this project through will be worth the cost – or, more ominously, the risk.

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05-2018 Passed Unanimously

U.S.S. Liberty; June 1967 Attack On The

Note: This resolution updates a similar resolution passed in 2002

Whereas, on June 8, 1967, the unarmed United States Navy technical research ship USS Liberty (AGTR-5) was attacked in international waters by Israeli military forces, resulting in 34 deaths and 171 wounded, and

Whereas, Veterans For Peace passed a resolution in 2002 requesting that Congress “initiate an in depth, full and honest investigation” of said attack, and

Whereas, there has not been a Congressional or other independent investigation in the 16 years since the 2002 resolution, and

Whereas, other veterans organizations including: the Veterans of Foreign Wars (2003), the American Legion (2017), and the USS Liberty Veterans Association, among others, have also passed resolutions or requests for an investigation since VFP's 2002 resolution, and,

Whereas, time is of the essence for conducting an investigation while survivors are still alive to testify, and,

Whereas, survivors, their families, and the American people are entitled to a thorough, open and conclusive investigation,

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that Veterans For Peace renew its 2002 resolution that the U.S. Congress conduct an in depth, full, honest and transparent investigation of the June 8, 1967 Israeli attack on the USS Liberty.

Be It Further Resolved that this resolution updates a similar resolution, with the same Therefore Be It Resolved language, approved by the membership in 2002.

Submitted by Rev. James L. Swarts, Chapter 23

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06-2018 Passed Unanimously

Protection of Refugee and Asylee Children for Whom the U.S. is Morally Responsible

Whereas, protection of children and their unconditional care are fundamental responsibilities of every society, and

Whereas detention of refugee and asylee children and separation from their parents at our borders is traumatic and deplorable, and

Whereas most of these families from Central America, Mexico and the Middle East are seeking refuge or asylum from intolerable conditions of military, criminal and /or economic violence and have been forced from their homes and communities as a direct result of U.S. foreign policies, and

Whereas millions of Palestinian children and their families have been dispossessed and made homeless by Israel's violent settler colonialism, unconditionally supported by U.S. foreign aid and protected by 45 US vetoes of UN Security Council resolutions of censure, and

Whereas U.S. foreign aid to Israel is almost exclusively in the form of U.S. weapons, which are used to indiscriminately kill, injure and brutalize Palestinians of all ages under its occupation and blockade, and

Whereas Israel arrests, detains and tortures Palestinian children, with 300-400 typically imprisoned and denied due process at any given time, and

Whereas Israel has murdered thousands of Palestinian parents with bombs, missiles, snipers and other lethal violence, leaving their children traumatized and orphaned, and

Whereas our Foreign Assistance Act prohibits foreign aid to any country that "engages in a consistent pattern" of "gross human rights violations," and our Arms Export Control Act limits use of American weapons to "legitimate self-defense," not abuse of children under occupation;

Therefore Be It Resolved that Veterans for Peace acknowledges U.S. responsibility for many refugee children and their families, and calls upon our government to protect refugee children and their family integrity at our borders and to care for their need, and

Be It Further Resolved VFP acknowledges U.S. responsibility for Israeli impunity, and calls upon our government to discontinue all aid to Israel in compliance with U.S. law and permit the UN Security Council to hold Israel accountable for its abuses of Palestinian children and their families

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08-2018 Passed, 11 Yeas, 2 Nays, 0 Abstentions

Remove Travel Bans Against Americans & North Koreans

Whereas, on September 1, 2017, the State Department imposed a harsh travel ban on all U.S. citizens who want to visit DPRK (North Korea), except by obtaining a “special validation passport,”

Whereas, the U.S. administration issued an executive order banning almost all entry into the U.S. by “nationals of North Korea,” effective Oct. 18, 2017,

Whereas, the said travel ban against American people constitutes a grave assault on the basic liberty and freedoms guaranteed to the American people under our Constitution,

Whereas, it is in our national interest to engage in people-to-people exchanges to promote mutual understanding and friendship with other nations and peoples,

Whereas, the U.S. administration now seeks “new U.S.-DPRK relations,” as stated in the Joint Statement from the Singapore Summit, it is critical to pursue “maximum engagement” with North Korea in order to promote permanent peace and nuclear disarmament on the Korean Peninsula,

Now, Therefore, Veterans for Peace (VFP),

1) Calls upon U.S. administration to lift immediately its travel ban on American citizens visiting North Korea as well as its restriction against “nationals of North Korea” coming to the U.S.;

2) Calls upon the Congress to take steps to remove such unconstitutional travel ban on American people; and

3) Urges VFP members and local Chapters to send a copy of this resolution to their respective members of Congress.

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Co-Sponsored by VFP-Korea Peace Campaign and Chapter 109

09-2018 Passed Unanimously

Resolution To End All Overt & CovertUS Aggression in Yemen & Military Assistance to Saudi Arabia & United Arab Emirates

Whereas, Veterans for Peace (VFP) opposes war in both overt and covert forms, and

Whereas, the United Nations charter prohibits “use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state,” and

Whereas, according to the International Law Commission “a State which aids or assists another State in the commission of an internationally wrongful act by the latter is internationally responsible for doing so,” and

Whereas, pilots from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are flying U.S. made planes -- refueled in flight by USAF air tankers with millions of pounds of jet fuel -- and dropping U.S. provided bombs on the people of Yemen using targeting information provided by the United States during thousands of Saudi and U.A.E. air strikes, and

Whereas, Yemen faces the worst humanitarian crisis in the world where epidemics of Cholera are exacerbated by the systematic bombing of public health facilities and child malnutrition rates are among the world’s highest, and

Whereas the U.S. House overwhelmingly passed a resolution last year that declared the US military had not been authorized to assist Saudi Arabia’s war in Yemen, and

Whereas, Section 502B of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act stipulates that “no security assistance may be provided to any country the government of which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights,”;

Therefore Be It Resolved that VFP calls on the U.S. government to immediately terminate all military and covert operations in Yemen, end all support for Saudi and UAE military attacks in Yemen and terminate all military aid and arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, and

Be It Further Resolved that VFP calls on the U.S. to provide all necessary funds through UN agencies to repair the war damage done to Yemen.

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